Expiry Date - 07/07/2023

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0600/23 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: **St Oscar Romero Catholic School Goring Street Worthing West Sussex**

Proposal: **Proposed extension of existing netball courts from 3 to 4 to create a new 4th court with new macadam surface and new fencing system and installation of flood lights to all courts.**

Site Visit: 05.07.23

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings

The application site relates to an area of land within the school grounds, to the west of existing netball courts. This is an enclosed site with access from Goring Street. There are residential dwellings to the school site boundaries, with those closest to the application site on the northern side being modern three storey houses off Bluebell Way.

A retirement living complex is currently under construction on the development site fronting Goring Street to the east of the netball courts (AWDM/0833/21 refers).

Proposal

The application proposes a fourth netball court to the west of the current three courts. It is also proposed that the existing and proposed courts would be floodlit. The new court will be surrounded by a 3m high twin wire fencing system.

The application includes a flood lighting plan showing light spillage.

The application includes supporting information for the requirement for the facility including insufficient playground space at break and lunchtimes and inadequate outdoor PE facilities for the current students. They also provide facilities for Saints Netball academy/netball provision in the local area as well as Worthing Netball Club.

The applicant has indicated that the courts would be used weekdays until 9:30, 7pm on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays.

Relevant site history:

AWDM/0754/20- Provision of 3no. single-storey classroom blocks to south of

site with associated hardstanding and landscaping- APPROVED

Consultations

Sport England has commented as follows:

It is understood that the proposal prejudices the use, or leads to the loss of use, of land being used as a playing field or has been used as a playing field in the last five years, as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2021 (Statutory Instrument 2021 No. 595). The consultation with Sport England is therefore a statutory requirement.

Sport England has considered the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular Para. 99), and against its own playing fields policy, which states:

'Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of:

- all or any part of a playing field, or
- land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped, or
- land allocated for use as a playing field

unless, in the judgement of Sport England, the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions.'

Sport England Policy Exceptions	
E1	A robust and up to date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.
E2	The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.
E3	The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not: ▪ reduce the size of any playing pitch; ▪ result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas); ▪ reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality; ▪ result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or ▪ prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.
E4	The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field: ▪ of equivalent or better quality, and ▪ of equivalent or greater quantity, and ▪ in a suitable location, and ▪ subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.
E5	The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the

	provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.

Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document can be viewed via the below link:
https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport#playing_fields_policy

Assessment against Sport England Policy

The proposal at St Oscar Romero Catholic School entails an extension of existing netball courts from 3 to 4 to create a new 4th court with new macadam surface and new fencing system and installation of flood lights to all courts.

Part of the additional court is to be sited on a hardstanding vehicular turning point which is not capable of forming part of a pitch. There is also an element of the proposal which has historically been marked out for rounders and shot put. Whilst there will be no encroachment onto the run off areas of the football pitch, rugby pitch, training grids and athletics track marked at the site.

The submitted Design and Access Statement highlights that the additional court and sports lighting will be beneficial for curricular, extra curricular and community sports clubs/netball provision in the area. To help inform this response Sport England consulted the LTA and England Netball with the former comments only received to date from the former. The LTA stated that the courts look to follow its guidelines. Further to this they would welcome an opportunity to speak to the school about opening up the facility for a coach to deliver community sessions on site post school where there is a demand and discuss its online booking system such as clubspark to help customer journey to court.

Given the above, the proposal will provide sporting benefits meeting an identified local need; provide benefits for the local community; improve the delivery of sport physical education at the site; and would not materially reduce the capability and flexibility of the playing field to provide for a range of sports and natural grass playing pitches.

The proposed development does result in a minor encroachment onto the playing field. However, having considered the nature of the playing field and its ability to accommodate a range of pitches, it is not considered that the development would reduce the sporting capability of the site.

Consequently, Sport England are of the view that the proposal broadly meets exception E3 and E5 of our playing fields policy.

This being the case Sport England **does not wish to raise an objection.**

Sport England would encourage a community use agreement planning condition to secure access for the community to the proposed facility should there not be one in place already.

Condition 16

Use of the development shall not commence [or no development shall commence or such other timescale] until a community use agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a copy of the completed approved agreement has been provided to the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to [describe facilities forming part of the development] and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-[educational establishment] users [/non-members], management responsibilities and a mechanism for review. The development shall not be used otherwise than in strict compliance with the approved agreement."

*Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Development Plan Policy **.*

Informative: Guidance on preparing Community Use Agreements is available from Sport England. http://www.sportengland.org/planningapplications/

WSCC Highway

This application is for the provision of a fourth netball court with associated fencing and lighting. The site is located off Goring Street, a C-classified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph.

The proposed netball court will be used by existing students at the school, and consequently the development is not anticipated to give rise to a material intensification of movements to or from the site.

Access and parking arrangements will be unaffected by the proposals. The LHA does note that the proposed netball court will result in the loss of an existing turning head. However, there appears to be adequate space within the wider site for turning, so this is not anticipated to be an issue.

In summary, the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 111), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

If the LPA are minded to approve the application, the following condition should be applied:

Construction Management Plan

No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the approved Plan shall be implemented and adhered to throughout the entire construction period. The Plan shall provide details as appropriate
but not necessarily be restricted to the following matters,

• the anticipated number, frequency and types of vehicles used during construction,
• the method of access and routing of vehicles during construction,
• the parking of vehicles by site operatives and visitors,
• the loading and unloading of plant, materials and waste,
• the storage of plant and materials used in construction of the development,
• the erection and maintenance of security hoarding,
• the provision of wheel washing facilities and other works required to mitigate the impact of construction upon the public highway (including the provision of temporary Traffic Regulation Orders),
• the prevention of deliveries at the site during school drop-off and pick-up time (generally 0800-0900 and 1430-1530),
• Access arrangements from the public highway, including temporary accesses and alterations to existing accesses.
• details of public engagement both prior to and during construction works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the amenities of the area.

Network Rail

Thank you for consulting Network Rail on the above planning application.

Following a review of the application, I can confirm that Network Rail have no objections to the proposal.

The Council's **Environmental Health Officer** has made the following comments:

There are no adverse EH comments for this application.

Representations

11 Chatsmore Crescent

I received a letter notifying about this proposal and the extension of the netball courts gets my full support as it promotes an active lifestyle and encourages more sport which is important.

Our only concern is again to do with parking in the area as this may cause additional need for parking in Goring Street spilling into Chatsmore Crescent. We now get people illegally parking on pavements, double yellows and using residents only parking and this is down to the amount of people who use Goring Street and Chatsmore Crescent as a station car park. This is an issue which is getting worse and it not being resolved by the council. So my full support goes to the school for the proposal, however the concern regarding parking needs addressing by means of restricted parking and residents parking permits

12 Blueberry Way

Care with angle and siting of floodlights! Previous school security light beamed directly into my FIRST floor lounge and SECOND floor bedroom. Like being caught in full beam headlights when walking into these rooms - VERY obtrusive. Issue was resolved successfully with school, but am concerned if recurs with floodlights will not be so easy to resolve. I do not see that I should be blinded by floodlights when entering my home.

Otherwise no objections

11 Blueberry Way

I have no objections to the application but would like to request written confirmation that the floodlights, which appear to be at the height of my lounge windows, are aimed only at the sports surface and will not illuminate my lounge

32 Belsize Road

New Netball courts would open up a variety of opportunities that are not available to us now.. There is a demand for a junior netball league in the Worthing area, with four thriving junior clubs in the local area, and the courts could be used to host this. There is a demand for local clubs to play outdoor County matches at this venue.. England Netball need Back to Netball leagues and this space could be used to set one up as well as England Netballs initiative of walking netball

Netball Saints Coach

My name is Julie House and I am the Head Coach for Saints Netball Academy. I set up the academy 3 years ago and we use the courts at St. Oscar Romero. There is a huge netball community in the area and a real need for more quality courts that can be used in the wet and in the dark. At present I have to cancel fixtures as soon as the courts are damp because there is only one indoor court.
New netball courts would also open up a variety of opportunities that are not available to us now;-
1. Worthing Junior Netball Club have already requested 2 evenings per week to use the courts for training as they do not have a permanent fixture.
2. Saints Netball Academy could train outside all year and with a growing number of girls more courts are needed. There are c. 50 girls currently on role with Saints.
3. There is a demand for a junior netball league in the Worthing area and the courts could be used to host this at the weekends - Inspire Netball Club have asked to use the courts if they go ahead.
4. Saints train Saturday mornings for Match Play and general training.
5. There is a demand for local clubs to play outdoor County and Regional matches at this venue.
6. England Netball need Back to Netball leagues and this space could be

used to set one up.
7. I would also like to start a Junior League at the weekends from September.

England Netball

Comments in support of the Development on behalf of England Netball - Sussex Netball Development Officer.

This facility would be a huge help for the netball community in West Sussex, across Clubs, School and Community Programmes. From Primary ages through to 80+ Walking Netball, this facility would support and enable netball to grow to its full potential in the area. Netball is currently limited due to lack of facilities like this in Sussex, so this would provide a great boost in participation for the county.

The addition of floodlights would mean use all year round for Club training, Leagues, Community programmes such as Back To Netball, Netball Now and Walking Netball. This large facility would be a welcome one to hold large scale festivals of netball and Netball Youth Camps in the School Holidays.

Relevant Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (HCLG 2021)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Worthing Local Plan 2020-2036 (WBC 2023)
DM5 - QUALITY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
DM8 PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES / COMMUNITY FACILITIES
DM22- Pollution

Planning Assessment

The principle of development can be supported as it will continue to sustain a school's function in the borough.

Policy DM8 -PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES / COMMUNITY FACILITIES indicates that:

a) The Council will support improvements to health, education, social, community and cultural facilities to ensure they meet the needs of local communities where it is demonstrated that there would be no unacceptable impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties.

b)The provision of multi-purpose facilities and the sharing or extended use of facilities that can be accessed by the wider community will be encouraged

The key considerations are:-

- Principle of development

- Impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- Effects on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers;
- Parking and highway safety considerations;

Paragraph 92 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles, including through (amongst other things) the provision of sports facilities. With particular reference to schools, the NPPF requires that in deciding planning applications local planning authorities give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools to ensure a sufficient choice of school places are available to meet the needs of existing and future communities (paragraph 95).

Para 99 of the NPPF states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless: a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

The proposal entails an extension of existing netball courts from 3 to 4 to create a new 4th court with new macadam surface and new fencing system and installation of flood lights to all courts.

Sport England indicate that although part of the fourth court is on an area historically marked out for rounders and shot put there will be no encroachment onto the run off areas of the football pitch, rugby pitch, training grids and athletics track marked at the site. They are however in agreement with the sporting benefits of the proposal meeting an identified local need; providing benefits for the local community and improving the delivery of sport physical education at the site; and that it would not materially reduce the capability and flexibility of the playing field to provide for a range of sports and natural grass playing pitches.

The proposed development does result in a minor encroachment onto the playing field. However, having considered the nature of the playing field and its ability to accommodate a range of pitches, it is not considered that the development would reduce the sporting capability of the site.

The principle would be acceptable and Sport England would encourage a community use agreement planning condition to secure access for the community to the proposed facility should there not be one in place already.

Character and appearance of the surrounding area

The proposed additional court and LED floodlighting scheme for the three existing courts and new court has been designed to provide light coverage for the netball courts to avoid adversely impacting surrounding properties.

The system consists of 16 LED lights on 10m high posts across the courts, 8 at the south and 8 at the north. The nearest light would be approx. 6m from the nearest property in Bluebell Way. The other lights are at a further distance.

The site is relatively enclosed by the existing buildings, the new court and lighting poles will be seen in the context of the buildings and would not be unduly prominent in the street scene.

The luminance levels mean that at the edge of the site they would be down to 25 Lux decreasing to 10 and 5 Lux at the rear of some properties in Bluebell Way.

The replacement fencing will be approx. 3m in height similar to the existing fencing and would not be unduly prominent.

Residential Amenity

The most affected properties are the nearest dwellings within Bluebell Way. The nearest property is approx 10 m from its rear elevation to the existing courts and one of the proposed nearest floodlights, other properties are at a further distance. All the properties which are three storey in height currently overlook the courts and playing fields.

The proposals for a new court and floodlighting will result in extended use of the facility both during the school day and extra-curricular use by the community at weekends and evenings in addition to a more intensive use during normal school hours. The associated increase in noise and activity has the potential to be disturbing for these nearest residents. The flood light plan shows that the max lux within the nearest garden is 10 lux. The environmental Health Officer has raised no objections to the proposal. The tennis courts exist and with the hours agreed with the applicant and little concern and mostly support from local residents it is not considered that the increased usage and floodlighting would cause detrimental harm so as to refuse the application.

Whilst the nearest neighbours in Bluebell Way will be aware of the floodlighting when in use the effects will not be so intrusive as to be considered harmful to residential amenity.

Access and Parking

Vehicular access to the main School campus site is from Goring Street and will remain unchanged. The car park area within the school grounds will be available for evening and weekends.

The Highway Authority is satisfied that the proposed floodlighting scheme will have no adverse highway safety implications for drivers using Littlehampton Road.

Expiry Date - 07/07/2023

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. No floodlighting except between 08.00hrs and 21.30hrs on Monday to Saturday and between 09.00hrs and 19.00hrs on Saturdays and not on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
4. Construction Method Statement and Plan
5 .Hours of construction
6. Community Agreement

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer: Jackie Fox Date: 06.07.23

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 06.07.2023